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Senate - 21

# Foreign Relations:

## No More Rescues for Reagan?

Claiborne Pell, D-R.I., the likely new chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, is best-known for his work in education rather than foreign affairs.

As the longtime chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Subcommittee on Education, Pell in 1972 authored legislation creating grants for needy college students. The "Pell Grants" have since helped millions of students pay for their college education and made the senator's name something of a household word.

By contrast, Pell's impact on foreign policy has been felt only at the margins. Pell has championed the State Department's career Foreign Service and has been a staunch advocate of liberal causes. But he has contributed little to the great debates of recent years on important foreign affairs issues and generally has left to others the task of drafting provisions and amendments for the Foreign Relations Committee's major pieces of legislation.

For the Reagan administration, the loss of Richard G. Lugar, R-Ind., as Foreign Relations chairman could have enormous implications. A conservative in sympathy with most administration policies, Lugar repeatedly used his negotiating skills to save President Reagan from embarrassing defeats on Capitol Hill. On issues ranging from Central America to the Middle East, Lugar stepped in at the crucial hour with compromises that enabled Reagan to claim victories.

Pell, by contrast, will have little incentive to rescue Reagan's policies. Instead, he probably will give free rein to younger, more aggressive committee Democrats who are anxious to establish Democratic records on issues ranging from Central America to South Africa.

While predicting a "change of emphasis," Pell said: "I will not be seeking confrontation with the administration." He expressed hope that Reagan will work with the committee toward

"a bipartisan, middle-of-the road approach" to arms control and other controversial issues.

Probably the biggest single change in the committee in 1987 will be its position on the issue of aid to the "contra" guerrillas in Nicaragua. The panel has supported the aid in recent years, by narrow margins, but probably will now oppose it. Pell likely will allow junior Democrats, including Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., and John Kerry, D-Mass., to take the lead on the issue. Kerry may finally get what he has been seeking for months: the right to subpoena witnesses and hold hearings on abuses allegedly committed by the contras.

The committee will get at



Richard G. Lugar, above, helped save the president on controversial policies. Claiborne Pell will be less obliging.

least two new members, both Democrats, to replace outgoing Thomas F. Eagleton, D-Mo., and Charles McC. Mathias Jr., R-Md. One question is whether Jesse Helms, R-N.C., who has seniority, will try to wrest the ranking minority slot from Lugar. Aides said Helms has not yet decided what to do; however, Lugar would resist such a move by Helms.

### Pell Background

Pell was first elected to the Senate in 1960 and has been re-elected ever since with little difficulty. He will be the fifth most senior Democrat in the Senate when the 100th Congress convenes next January. Pell has been the ranking Democrat on Foreign Relations since Republicans took control of the Senate in 1981. In the last two

years of the Carter administration, he was second in committee seniority to the last Democratic chairman, Frank Church, D-Idaho (1957-81).

Few issues arouse Pell as does the fate of the career Foreign Service, in which he served from 1945-52. Pell was a junior State Department official at the San Francisco founding conference of the United Nations in 1945 — an experience that made him a strong U.N. supporter. He also served at U.S. diplomatic posts in Czechoslovakia and Italy. He is a tireless advocate of the Foreign Service, backing increased funding for the State Department and demanding more promotions of career officers to ambassadorships. He has sharply criticized Reagan's practice of naming friends and Republican Party activists to foreign posts.

In 1985, Pell joined Mathias in asking the American Academy of Diplomacy to rate nominees for foreign posts. The academy, composed of retired diplomats, submitted its first report on June 24; it expressed "a strong undercurrent of doubt" about the qualifications of Nicholas Ruwe, Reagan's nominee for ambassador to Iceland. The academy's report was ridiculed by other Foreign Relations Committee members, and Ruwe was confirmed, but Pell voted present "out of deference to the academy." (1985 *Weekly Report* p. 1257)

As one of the few senators still serving who voted for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution in 1964, Pell is highly skeptical about presidential requests for congressional grants of authority in foreign affairs. Pell has said his vote for the resolution — which President Johnson used to justify escalation of the Vietnam War — was his greatest mistake as a senator.

Pell in 1983 opposed a resolution (S J Res 159) authorizing Reagan to keep U.S. Marines in Lebanon as a peacekeeping force. The measure was "another Tonkin Gulf Resolution," he said. Pell used the same terminology to criticize this year's proposal for \$100 million in U.S. aid to the contras, whom he calls "our terrorists."

Although a staunch liberal, Pell generally surrenders the task of challenging the Reagan administration to younger Democrats on the Foreign Relations Committee: Joseph R. Bi-

—By John Felton